



Nick Licata
Seattle City Council
Memorandum

Date: July 30, 2014

To: President Burgess and Members of the Council

From: Nick Licata, Budget Committee Chair

Subject: Budget Review Guidelines for FALL 2014

The city's budget planning for 2015-2016 is underway. As you may know, Mayor Murray is scheduled to present his proposed budget, including the 2015-2020 Capital Improvement Program, on September 22, 2014. To assist you through the budget review process, please review the guidelines highlighted below, and don't hesitate to stop by if you have any questions.

Budget Schedule

Attached is the revised *Fall 2014 Budget Review Schedule* as well as the revised *Departmental Presentation Schedule*. As mentioned above, the Mayor presents his proposed budget on Monday, September 22. Selected departments will provide departmental overviews October 7 through October 10. Issue identification is scheduled to begin October 20. Round 1 is scheduled to begin on October 30 and Round 2 on November 12. The Budget Committee may meet on all scheduled dates – or a subset of dates. (See sections below on “Minimum Support Needed for Green Sheets and Statement of Legislative Intent” *and* “Deadline for Identification of Budget Issues” for more information.) During the week of October 20, the Council will identify issues requiring further analysis. The requisite public hearings are scheduled: October 7 and October 23. If you will be out of town during any part of the budget process, please contact Traci Ratzliff as soon as possible. She will do her best to schedule around absences.

Standing Council Committee Meetings

Unless legislative action is required on a specific issue, Standing Committee Council (SCC) meetings will be suspended from September 29 to November 24. (NOTE: Contrary to customary practice, SCC meetings will not be suspended during the week of the Mayor's proposed budget presentation). If your committee needs to meet during the suspension time period, please seek pre-approval from Council President Burgess and me. If your request is approved, please coordinate the date and time with Traci.

Minimum Support Needed for Green Sheets and Statement of Legislative Intent

Consistent with recent years, sponsorship from three Councilmembers (two councilmembers plus the sponsor) will be needed for a Green Sheet or a Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) to be included on the Budget Committee's agenda. This work

occurs during Round 1 deliberations. (NOTE: Staff may inquire whether sponsors have been identified before investing significant time in preparing draft materials.)

Use of Central Staff Resources

To more effectively utilize Central Staff (CS) during the budget process, Kirstan, with the assistance of her staff, will identify budget issues to be assigned to Central Staff. Generally, these will be issues that are of greatest significance in the budget and greatest relevance to the Council using factors such as Councilmembers' priorities, issue relevance to the budget, level of funding, the existence of differences between Council and Mayoral positions, etc. This does not mean that other issues will not be considered or worked on. Legislative Assistants (LA) may staff issues instead of CS, and would therefore be working for the entire Council. It's the Council's expectation that all analytical and budget materials be thorough in terms of information provided and options to be considered. CS will make every effort to be available to assist LAs and review materials before they are finalized.

Deadline for Identification of Budget Issues – October 30, 2014

The first day of Round 1 will be the deadline for the identification of new budget issues. This year, the first day of Round 1 is anticipated to begin on October 30, 2014. (This deadline could be extended at my discretion.) The establishment of this deadline means that Council offices must clearly identify all relevant issues as soon as possible so that all issues can be vetted fully, publicly discussed and evaluated.

Information Requests

Consistent with recent practice, CS (or applicable LAs) will serve as 'gatekeepers' to aid in the management and flow of questions and answers (e.g., consolidate, screen and submit questions during the budget process). CS will identify budget-related questions in advance of receiving the proposed budget.

Public-Access to Council Briefing Materials

The Council's webpage will provide links to department presentations, issue identification papers, green sheets, SLI, and Budget Guidance Statements - developed by staff and discussed during Budget Committee meetings. These documents are required to be posted in a timely manner and made available in hard copy via the *Budget Review Notebook*. Materials will also be made available to the public and the press in Council Chambers daily. (NOTE: Not all materials are subject to public disclosure. When unsure, please contact the Public Records staff.)

Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Attachments

cc: Kirstan Arestad
Traci Ratzliff
Legislative Assistants